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ABSTRACT

This is the sixth annual report of the National Advisory Council on Child Nutrition. Its purpose is to provide a continuing study of the child nutrition programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The Council reports that implementation of the Five State Nutrition Education Project is underway. This project focuses on teaming the food service manager and the elementary teacher for effective classroom lunchroom nutrition education activities. The Council also reports on the development of various training programs for school food service personnel. Studies and surveys being conducted are also reported. For example, the Food and Nutrition Service is currently conducting a nutritional assessment of lunches served in the schools. FNS has also completed a pilot study to assess and compare the nutritional and microbiological aspects of food preparation and delivery systems used in school food service. The Council also makes recommendations. Among them: (1) it recommends increased emphasis in the areas of nutrition and nutrition education, (2) it recommends that funds be given for conducting experimental or demonstration projects to teach school children the nutritional value of foods and the relationship of nutrition to health, (3) it went on record as opposing the mandated free milk provisions of the Special Milk Program in schools which have either the School Lunch or School Breakfast Program. (Author/AM)

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National Advisory Council on **Child Nutrition** 1976 Annual Report

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United States Department of Agriculture

Food And Nutrition Service

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

This sixth annual report of the National Advisory Council on Child Nutrition is herewith submitted to you and the Congress.

The Council's function is to make a continuing study of the child nutrition programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Food and Nutrition Service and to report annually to the President and the Congress on its recommended administrative and legislative changes. The Council is composed of representatives from within USDA and from specific fields of experience outside of the Department.

The Council's recommendations are as follows:

As in past years, the Council recommended increased emphasis in the areas of nutrition and nutrition education. Thus during 1976 the Council recommended the funding of Section 6(a)(3) of the National School Lunch Act. This section authorizes the Secretary to supplement the nutritional benefits of the child nutrition programs through grants to States, and other means, for nutritional training and education for workers, cooperators, and participants, and for necessary surveys and studies.

The Council further recommended that Section 18 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 be funded. This section provides funds for conducting experimental or demonstration projects to teach school children the nutritional value of foods and the relationship of nutrition to health. It also provides for developing materials and techniques for the innovative presentation of nutrition information.

After considerable discussion of food waste in the child nutrition programs, the Council went on record opposing the mandated free milk provisions of the Special Milk Program in schools which have either the School Lunch or School Breakfast Program. Council members stressed that this action was taken because of the adequate nutrition currently available to needy children under the mandated free meal provisions of the School Lunch or School Breakfast Program, and not because of administrative infeasibility.

The Council recommended that the apportionment of State administrative expense funds be based on the needs of the States for administering effective and efficient child nutrition programs, taking into consideration an equitable Federal/State sharing of such costs, and not solely on provisions of child nutrition legislation concerned with services to needy children.

The report goes into more detail on these recommendations.

Because we in the Department feel committed to making major changes to improve the nutritional quality and the attractiveness of school lunches, we greatly appreciate the Advisory Council's advice. We are sure they will be especially helpful as we begin our recently announced review of all the child nutrition programs.

Respectfully,

Carol Tucker Foreman

Carol Tucker Foreman
Assistant Secretary and Chairperson
National Advisory Council on Child Nutrition

Sixth Annual Report

National Advisory Council on Child Nutrition

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Activities of the National Advisory Council on Child Nutrition During 1976

The National Advisory Council on Child Nutrition met three times in 1976: April 6 and 7 in Washington, D.C.; August 2 and 3 in Honolulu, Hawaii; and December 6 and 7 in El Paso, Texas.

The following subjects were discussed at the April meeting:

1. The status of surveys and studies underway at the time;
2. The 1977 budget request and proposed block grant legislation;
3. Regulatory changes required by the passage of Public Law 94-105;
4. The Special Milk Program evaluation-study;
5. The State Staffing Study mandated by Public Law 94-105;
6. The Plate Waste Study and the possible revision of meal patterns.

Activities during the August meeting centered around the following:

1. Oversight hearings scheduled by Congressman Perkins, Chairman of the House Committee on Education and Labor;
2. The Summer Food Service Program for Children;
3. The donated commodity situation for schools and institutions;
4. The evaluation of School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs in the State of Washington by Washington State University;
5. The administration of the child nutrition programs in the Nation's nonprofit private schools;
6. An update on the State Staffing Study;
7. Council participation in various sessions of the American School Food Service Association Convention.

In addition to visiting and having lunch at El Paso High School and participating in the first day sessions of the National Conference of State Directors on the child nutrition programs, members of the Council participated in the following discussions during the December meeting:

1. The "offer vs. serve" provisions of the National School Lunch Program;
2. The Summer Food Service Program for Children;
3. Grants to States for nutritional training and education for workers, cooperators, and participants;
4. Surveys and Studies;
5. State administrative expenses and the State Staffing Study.

Progress Report

Nutrition Education

Implementation of the Five-State Nutrition Education Project—Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi and Tennessee—is underway. This project focuses on teaming of the food service manager and the elementary teacher for effective classroom-lunchroom nutrition education activities. The model emphasizes the development of innovative teaching approaches, interpersonal relationships, and nutrition education subject matter materials.

FNS' Nutrition and Technical Services Staff members have presented this team approach concept at national, regional, and State meetings or workshops sponsored by FNS or professional organizations, including the Society for Nutrition Education and the American School Food Service Association. Individuals from the five Southeastern States who developed the program have been trained to utilize the model and are in turn training additional teams within their respective States.

Audiovisual and print materials resulting from grants to States and contracts are being reviewed. The curriculum guides, educational tools, and video-tape presentations are designed to enhance and support nutrition education activities.

In some of the Section 6(a)(3) projects, nutrition education specialists were hired at the State level to demonstrate the potential for effecting positive change in food habits among school children. The project design included activities to introduce students to new foods, increase students' food consumption, and increase lunchroom participation. The overall goal of the projects was to reduce food and beverage waste and increase nutrient intake.

Again, results of these projects have been shared with various professional organizations including the Society for Nutrition Education, the American School Food Service Association and the American School Health Association at annual meetings, as well as at special seminars and workshops.

Working in cooperation with health educators in the operation of the projects has been effective. The FNS materials provided to the health educators have been used advantageously. An article is being prepared for the *Journal of School Health* to publicize some of the ways in which health educators, teachers, school food service personnel, school nurses, school physicians, and others have used the team approach to nutrition education. These activities should encourage and increase the use of school food service related nutrition education throughout the Nation.

An activity of the Nutrition and Technical Services Staff is the compiling and updating of resource references to share with State cooperating units. The references include a list of nutrition education and health education curriculum guides available from States, and a list of free or inexpensive nutrition education materials available from professional organizations, trade associations, and food industry firms.

Results of the Nutrition Education Survey of the States were further analyzed on a State-to-State, regional and national basis during the year. These findings were presented to the Chief State School Officers last August. They were encouraged to use the survey find-

ings to mobilize appropriate offices within the State Department of Education. These offices included curriculum and instruction, and school food service, to increase and coordinate nutrition education activities within the States. Regional FNS offices were encouraged to assist personnel of the State educational agencies in utilizing the data to assess the status of nutrition education, formulate policies, and incorporate nutrition education in their respective State plans of operation. The executive summary of this survey has been used to respond to many inquiries from educational and professional organizations and groups.

Training of School Food Service Personnel

Representatives from the five training projects, funded through grants to States to upgrade the knowledge and skills of food service personnel, participated in a briefing in Washington, D.C., in December 1976. These States—Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, South Dakota, and Wyoming—designed training programs to meet major training needs of food service workers in each State. The programs range from independent, self-learning packages for employees in isolated rural communities, to courses offered through adult community education classes in metropolitan areas. A forthcoming issue of the *Food and Nutrition* magazine will summarize these projects. The Council expressed interest in featuring these projects on the program of a future meeting.

Two contracts, recently completed, also provide a variety of tools for improving the competencies of school food service personnel. A correspondence course, developed under contract with the University of Wisconsin for school food service managers, is scheduled to operate on a pilot basis next fall. The program consists of eight independent courses.

The Educational Institute of the American Hotel and Motel Association completed a contract for another type of training effort. The package includes nine training manuals, a financial management manual, and an instructor's guide. The material is being readied for sharing with State cooperating units and other appropriate educational institutions in their 1977 summer training workshops.

Guidance has been provided in several areas of food service operation. Preliminary administrative guidance materials on the "offer vs. serve" provision, under Public Law 94-105 regarding lunch requirements for senior high school students, were developed and shared with the State agencies last fall. In addition, regional and State workshops were conducted to clarify procedures of this provision.

In the October 26, 1976 issue of the *Federal Register,* FNS announced plans to provide fiscal year 1977 funds ($250,000), through grants to States, for projects pertaining to the training of school food personnel at the local level. The goal of the training projects is to improve food acceptability in the school food service programs through more effective meal planning, preparation, and service—to increase student participation. Previously developed program aids and materials will be available to awardees for use in the training program to improve food service management and operation techniques. Proposals were to be submitted by March 7 and awards will be made on June 1, 1977.

Studies and Surveys

As reported in the fifth annual report of the Council, Section 19 of Public Law 94-105 authorized the Secretary of Agriculture to undertake a nutrition program State staffing study. As a part of this study the Secretary is required to examine possible relationships between plate waste and (1) lack of adequate menu development, (2) service of competitive foods, and (3) the nature of the Type A lunch pattern.

In order to meet this requirement, FNS has done the following:

1. It conducted a review of the Type A pattern in cooperation with the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), taking into account the 1974 revision of the Recommended Dietary Allowances. This review led to the development of proposed revisions in the lunch pattern which are to be published shortly in the *Federal Register* allowing adequate time for comment by all interested persons prior to finalization of regulations. To reduce plate waste while maintaining nutritional goals, revisions are to be proposed to specify meal requirements by age groups, allowing smaller portion sizes for elementary school students while more accurately meeting the nutritional needs of children of all ages. Additionally, a number of foods previously not included, such as rice and macaroni, will be proposed for addition to the Type A lunch pattern. This will eliminate some of the items in the "other foods" category and will change the required amounts of some food components. The requirement for butter or fortified margarine was previously deleted from the pattern.

2. FNS is currently conducting a nutritional assessment of lunches served in schools. Data have been collected from a nationwide survey of 104 schools to assess the nutritional contribution of lunches served and consumed, and the amount of plate waste. Test schools were about evenly divided between those which prepare food in their own onsite kitchens and those to which fully prepared food is delivered. On two consecutive days, the researchers compared the weight of the menu items served in each Type A food category to the weight of the same items not eaten by a sample group of 3,120 students.

Preliminary figures show the average percent of food consumed by menu item category in the 104 test schools:

PERCENT OF FOOD CONSUMED

Type A Menu Food Category	*Schools with Onsite Kitchens*	*Schools Where Prepared Food Is Delivered*
Meat	86	83
Fruit/Vegetable	67	58
Bread/Butter	86	80
Milk	87	88

A rough averaging of the above figures indicates that students actually ate 81.5 percent of the food served in the test schools with onsite kitchens, and they ate 77.25 percent of the food served in schools using delivered lunches. For a more accurate assessment, such overall averages should take into account the relative amount, nutritional importance, and cost of each food category in the total meal.

Obvious limitations exist in applying the above figures from 104 schools to the national scene of nearly 90,000 schools in the National School Lunch Program. For instance, about half of the schools in the sample used onsite food preparation and half used pre-prepared delivered meals. Nationally, only a fifth or less of lunch program schools use delivered meals. Therefore, when the data were weighted and averaged to reflect the proportion of systems as used on a national basis, the average rates of food consumption by menu component became:

Menu Component	*Percent Consumed*
Meat	86
Fruit/Vegetable	65
Bread/Butter	85
Milk	87

A rough calculation of the above percentages gives an overall average of 80.8 percent of food consumed.

Additionally, the above figures were based on a sample including four-fifths elementary schools. Studies show that elementary schools had a food consumption rate about 10 percent lower than secondary schools. Nationally, elementary schools comprise about 55 percent of the schools in the lunch program. By weighting these factors in assessing the data, preliminary analysis suggests that the most likely overall estimate on how much of the school lunch is consumed is 85 percent.

3. FNS completed a pilot study to assess and compare the nutritional and microbiological aspects of food preparation and delivery systems used in school food service. The sample was comprised of four systems and 16 schools. The systems studied included 1) onsite preparation and service, 2) central preparation with hot bulk delivery, 3) central preparation with chilled, preportioned delivery, and 4) frozen, preportioned delivery. This study was designed to provide for an analysis of differences among the systems. Because of the small sample size and the design of this study, the results cannot be considered representative of individual systems.

Selected nutrients were used for each test food to evaluate nutrient retention according to preparation and delivery system. Nutrient content of the test foods used in the study varied considerably from sample-to-sample because of differences in ingredients and recipes, as well as food service conditions. For this reason, nutrient levels associated with different systems were rarely significant, but for most nutrients in most foods, school-to-school variations within a system were typically significant. These results suggest that these four systems are all capable of preparing and delivering food having comparable nutritional value. School-to-school variability indicates a need for instruction of school food service personnel in production methods to deliver food of highest possible nutritional value.

Microbiological data, including counts

of organisms indicating contamination, poor sanitation, mishandling, and time-temperature abuse, were collected on all samples. Based on these data, all systems tested were capable of producing a micribiologically safe meal and were not significantly different. School-to-school variability was large and potential food safety hazards existed in some schools in each system. To assure a safe food supply, food service personnel need to be better trained on food service sanitation and food safety. Definitive food service sanitation specifications should also be developed.

The acceptability of the foods served during the test, as determined by total amounts of foods consumed, did vary according to the preparation/delivery system. Meals prepared and served onsite had higher acceptability than did chilled or frozen preportioned meals. A variety of factors appeared to be responsible for this difference, including appearance, monotony, taste, portion size and overall meal quality, as well as student interaction with school food service personnel.

4. FNS contracted with Colorado State University to conduct a study to compare complete Type A lunches with lunches planned according to alternative meal patterns in senior high schools. Three different meal patterns will be tested as possible alternatives to the current Type A pattern for high school students. The types of data to be evaluated for each menu planning method include 1) amount of nutrients served and consumed, 2) amount of plate waste, 3) food cost, 4) management factors, and 5) degree of student satisfaction. Data will be collected from September to December 1977, with the final report due in July 1978.

5. FNS developed plans for a nutritional evaluation of the School Breakfast Program. Specific objectives include an assessment of the food consumption and nutrient contribution of the breakfast, food and labor costs, and degree of student satisfaction. The amount of plate waste in schools offering a breakfast and lunch program will be contrasted with the amount of waste in schools offering only a lunch program.

Special Studies

In accordance with the Council's function to make a continuing study of the Child Nutrition Programs, the Council reviewed the recently completed "Evaluation of School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs in the State of Washington." This study was conducted by Washington State University, as an interdisciplinary effort involving nutritionists and social scientists, to evaluate the effects of the National School Lunch Program by ethnic groups of children in the State of Washington. The objectives of the study included:

1) determining the effects of the school feeding programs on the dietary profiles and nutritional status of children by ethnic group; 2) relating socioeconomic and psychological variables to nutritional status and food acceptance of children, participating and not participating, in school feeding programs; 3) determining why some schools do not participate in the breakfast and lunch programs; and 4) developing recommendations to improve menu and management patterns and to increase participation in school feeding programs. Data were collected from 1,013

children during 1972-73.

School lunches contributed between 28 and 47 percent of the total daily energy and nutrient intake of participating children. The highest nutrient contributions of the program were calcium, vitamin A, riboflavin, protein, and phosphorus. The school lunches contributed a higher percentage of all nutrients except niacin and ascorbic acid to the daily intake of the below-poverty level children than to the above-poverty level children. The school lunch contributed less iron as a percentage of the total daily intake than it did for other nutrients. While only 2.4 percent of the sample participated in the breakfast program at least 4 days of the week, analyses indicated that intakes of ascorbic acid were 49 percent higher for breakfast participants than for nonparticipants. Anthropometric studies found 12-17 percent of the children obese. Other than obesity, however, most children did not show physical symptoms of malnutrition.

The menu was found by the investigators to be the most sensitive issue to both parents and children. However, school lunch supervisors were primarily concerned with total meal cost. Most supervisors saw no way to reduce present expenses. They did not want to increase the price of lunch because of the discouraging effect on participation. The study estimated that an increase of 5 cents in price would decrease participation by 6 percent. Interviews with school administrators indicated that among districts that had never participated in the school lunch program the primary reason for nonparticipation was that there was no perceived need for the program. Among districts that had previously participated, finances and low participation were primary reasons for dropping the program.

Recommendations

Nutrition Program State Staff Study

During 1976, Council members gave considerable attention to the personnel needs of the State agencies to effectively administer the various child nutrition programs. They applauded the action of the Congress in passing legislation (Public Law 94-105, approved October 7, 1975) mandating a study to determine how the States are using Federal funds in the administration of the child nutrition programs. (The Council looked upon the Congressional action as a culmination of previous recommendations to strengthen State administrative staffs.) One of the major objectives of the study was to determine the level of funds needed by the States. Another objective was to report on the current size and structure of each staff and to indicate training provided for them.

Preliminary data indicate that a total of nearly $23 million was expended by the States in 1975 to administer the child nutrition programs. The projected cost of fully implementing all of the new legislative requirements would be nearly $44 million. The difference of $21 million would necessarily come from a combination of State and Federal sources. The study indicates that nearly 40 percent of the total administration of the child nutrition programs is handled by units of State government, such as finance and accounting, other than State school food service agencies.

The study indicates that most of the funds allotted for State administration are required for the National School Lunch Program; the second greatest funding need is for implementing the requirements of Federal Management Circular 74-7 which requires an audit of local sponsors at least every other year. The Food Distribution Program was third, followed by the Summer Feeding and Child Care Food Programs. School Breakfast, Special Milk and Nonfood Assistance Programs required the least administrative expense at the State level.

The Council's concern with this subject came to a head at the August 2-3 meeting. Fearing that the Administration might ask for a rescission from the $13.7 million appropriated by the Congress for State administrative expenses for 1977, the Council went on record opposing such a rescission with the recommendation that the need for additional funds be based on the Nutrition Program Staff Study.

At the December 6-7 meeting the subject of State administrative expenses came up again. The Council was concerned not only about additional funds, but also about the need for a completely different and more equitable approach to allocating administrative funds among the States. The Council recommended that the Department of Agriculture prepare a listing of administrative duties which all States are expected to perform and that, based on this listing, the Department devise a new formula for distributing State administrative expense funds. The Council recognizes that such a formula could not be prescribed administratively and would require legislative action.

Recommendations

Special Milk Program

In November 1975 and April 1976, preliminary findings of the Special Milk Program (SMP) Evaluation were presented to the Council. One of the principal objectives of the study was to assess the impact of the free milk provision, mandated by Public Law 93-150, on the milk program.

The study revealed that:

1. The provision was responsible for about 4,000 schools dropping out of the milk program. Expected difficulty in administering the program, especially in avoiding overt identification of free milk recipients, was the principal reason given for dropping the program.

2. Almost 32 percent of the schools which maintained the program reported no free milk served. Apparently, the free milk provision was either unknown or ignored in a large number of schools.

3. While free milk served through the milk program helps put needy children on a par with nonneedy children in terms of *total* daily milk consumption, even without free SMP milk, needy children would consume about 10 percent more milk *at school* than do nonneedy children.

Survey data were also presented to the Council which indicated that, over all SMP schools, as the percentage of children eligible for free milk rose, so did the amount of milk wasted. Since milk waste was not measured by type of recipient (paid versus free), these data are not proof positive that free milk adds to milk waste. They do suggest this conclusion, however.

After considerable discussion of the above findings and other related data, the Council recommended that the mandated service of free milk through the SMP be restricted to schools which have neither the School Lunch nor School Breakfast Programs. The Council stressed that this recommendation was made in consideration of the adequate nutrition currently available to needy children through the mandated free meal provision of the lunch and breakfast programs and in consideration of reducing food waste.

Plate Waste

The Council continued its acute interest in developments resulting from the amendment to Section 9(a) of the National School Lunch Act brought about by Public Law 94-105. This amendment reads in part as follows: "Students in senior high schools which participate in the school lunch program under this Act shall not be required to accept offered foods which they do not intend to consume, and any such failure to accept offered foods shall not affect the full charge to the students for a lunch meeting the requirements of this subsection or the amount of payments made under this Act to any such school for such a lunch." The Council's Annual Report for 1975 includes a resolution opposing this amendment before it became law.

Some Council members felt that the Congress went too far and that probably the law should be changed to permit a more workable approach to the problem. There was concern that the amendment would pose considerable problems in combined junior and senior high schools. Council members felt that the most severe problems would be in schools receiving prepackaged unitized meals from off-site preparation centers. The question

was raised why, if plate waste was the real concern, did the Congress limit the provisions of the amendment to senior high schools since many of the plate waste problems are to be found in elementary schools.

Also, there was general consensus that labor savings in preplated lunches tend to offset the cost of greater food waste in such operations; that the amendment to Section 9(a) of the National School Lunch Act is a transitional amendment; that where choice is provided, students are taking the complete Type A lunch; that since the greatest food waste is in vegetables, more fruit should be offered; that girls waste more food than boys; and that buffet lines tend to reduce food waste. It was clearly agreed, however, more experience is needed before valid conclusions could be reached on the subject.

Nutrition Education, Surveys and Studies

Council members have shown enormous interest in nutrition education and necessary surveys and studies. Thus during 1976 they recommended that funds be appropriated for Section 6(a)(3) of the National School Lunch Act, "to supplement the nutritional benefits of these programs through grants to States and other means for nutritional training and education for workers, cooperators, and participants in these programs and for necessary surveys and studies of requirements for food service programs in furtherance of the purposes expressed in Section 2 of this Act and Section 2 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966."

In addition, Council members recommended that funds be appropriated for Section 18 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 which authorizes and directs the Secretary of Agriculture "to make cash grants to State educational agencies for the purpose of conducting experimental or demonstration projects to teach school children the nutritional value of foods and the relationship of nutrition to human health." A portion of these funds may be used "to carry out research and development projects relevant to the purpose of this section, particularly to develop materials and techniques for the innovative presentation of nutritional information."

Selected Program Statistics

Total Funding	FY 1975	$1,901,314,000	FY 1976	$2,517,068,000

Total children enrolled in schools (United States, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and Trust Territory)	50.5 million
Percentages of enrollment in National School Lunch Program schools October 1975	88.7 percent
Percentage of enrollment in schools offering other food service or no food service of any kind	11.3 percent

Participation Comparison

	Peak Month FY 1975 (Final)	*Peak Month FY 1976 (Preliminary)*	*November 1976 (Preliminary)*
National School Lunch Program			
Schools participating	88,921	89,698	92,367[1]
Children participating (millions)	25.3	25.9	26.4
Children receiving free or reduced price lunches (millions)	10.6	11.2	11.4
School Breakfast Program			
Schools participating	14,277	17,337	19,656[1]
Children participating (millions)	2.0	2.3	2.5
Percent breakfasts served free or at reduced prices (percent)	82.1	83.4	83.7
Special Milk Program			
Outlets participating	86,691	84,730	83,389[1]
Half-pints of milk served (millions)	252.7	274.5	224.3
Child Care Food Program			
Outlets participating	11,676	12,865	13,834
Children participating	457,102	463,146	458,454

Summer Food Service Program for Children	*July 1975*	*July 1976*
Outlets participating	16,008	26,755
Children participating (millions)	2.4	3.9

	FY 1975	*FY 1976*
Total value of food used in National School Lunch Program (millions)	$2,251	$2,435
Total value of federally donated food and cash in lieu of commodities for lunches (millions)	$406	$459
Number of half-pints of milk used in school programs (millions)	6,496	6,829

[1]Based on October 1976 data.

* U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1977—251-435/[illegible]